

REMARKS

Claims 2-9 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application, and Claims 1 and 11 – 21 were previously withdrawn.

In the Office Action, Claims 2-9 were rejected.

In the Amendment, Claims 1 and 11 – 21 are cancelled.

Accordingly, Claims 2 – 9 remain at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims 2-9

Claims 2-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Yasukawa et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2006-0172201). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The instant application claims priority to the Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-335055, which was filed on November 19, 2002. The cited reference, U.S. Publication No. 2006/0172201, to Yasukawa was filed in the United States on June 25, 2003.

In order to overcome the date of the Yasukawa reference relied upon by the Examiner for this 102(e) rejection and in accordance with 37 CFR 1.55, Applicants are obtaining a certified English translation of the certified copy of the corresponding Japanese Application No. 2002-335055. This certified translation will be submitted in a supplemental amendment.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these rejections of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims 2-9

Claims 2-4 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Mie et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2004-0106047). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The instant application claims priority to the Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-335055, which was filed on November 19, 2002. The cited reference, U.S. Publication No. 2004/0106047, to Mie was filed in the United States on October 22, 2003.

In order to overcome the date of the Mie et al. reference relied upon by the Examiner for this 102(e) rejection and in accordance with 37 CFR 1.55, Applicant is obtaining a certified English translation of the certified copy of the corresponding Japanese Application No. 2002-335055. This certified translation will be submitted in a supplemental amendment.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these rejections of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 2 – 9 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Dated: Jan 25, 2008

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